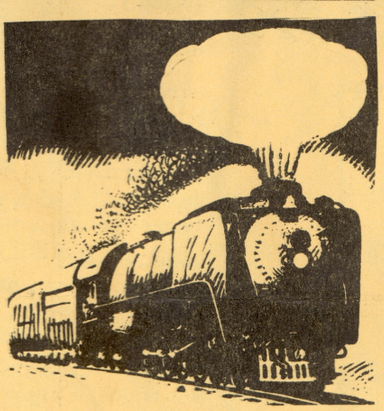
1980

DEPOT TOWN ASSOCIATION, INC.
Meets at the Caboose,
400 Market Place
7:30 p.m., Thursday

depot town



Materials Unlimited Completes Local Antique Circle

Fully recovered from their $250,000 fire which totally destroyed their unique collection of architectural artifacts, Reynold Lowe has re-opened his business in what was formerly the Ypsilanti Moose Lodge on Michigan Avenue, just West of the Huron River Bridge. The three display floors make a nice fall weekend walk for antiquers accustomed to shopping at **Depot Exchange, JCT Antiques** and **James MacDonald Antiques.** It's a nice walk through Riverside Park. Don't miss this very special walking/shopping tour.

Health Insurance Program for Association Members?

Several business and resident folk in the block have asked that this be a topic for consideration by the Association. Facts and figures will be discussed at the October 16 meeting. Don't miss this opportunity!

EMU Homecoming to Visit Depot Town

Officials are still trying to route the October 18th EMU Homecoming Parade through this block for their annual event. Since many returning alumni will be checking out their old Depot Town haunts, local businesses may wish to feature special events and bargains for that fall weekend.

JC-WEMU FUN RUN ran through Depot Town at midnight on Saturday, October 4. Many of the several hundred runners returned to local beer gardens to put those lost calories right back on. Now, that's recycling!

Maximum Capacity in Depot Town

The **Anderson For President Headquarters** now leaves only one unrented property on the block. Older observers are hard-pressed to remember any time in recent history with such high occupancy in this block. A 1910 survey of the district showed ten unused first-floor bays. These must be the "good old days."

Charter Proposal May Soon Appear on Ballot Former Mayor to Speak on Topic in October

The City Council-approved proposal now reads: "Shall the Charter of the City of Ypsilanti be amended to reduce the number of Councilmembers from each ward from two councilmembers to one councilmember; establish a new elected at-large council position — the Mayor pro tem; to elect the Mayor, Mayor pro tem and councilmembers by non-partisan election; to eliminate the primary election for nominating candidates to city office."

Former Mayor John Burton, who also chairs the TEEG committee which initiated the concept, will speak at the October 16 meeting of the Depot Town Association.

Should DTA Apply For Neighborhood Assistance and Participation Program?

Neighborhood decline and decay have been widely recognized as serious problems in Michigan. To encourage and stimulate the revitalization of neighborhoods and to improve the economic vitality of local businesses, the state has established the Neighborhood Assistance and Participation Program (NAPP) in Public Act 56 of 1980. NAPP provides rebates to businesses that contribute to neighborhood organizations operating projects designed to assist deteriorating or blighted neighborhoods, or neighborhoods threatened by these conditions.

In NAPP, organized neighborhood groups and business firms enter into a local neighborhood improvement or self-help project as partners. The state rebates 50% of the business firm's contribution to an approved project and becomes the third member of the partnership. The business contribution may be in the form of cash, property, material goods, or personnel services.

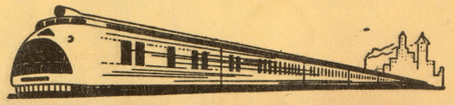
Neighborhood assistance funds are being targeted to neighborhoods demonstrating the greatest need. Criteria used to determine eligibility include such indicators as: (a) decline in real per capital income; (b) unemployment; (c) relative decline in State Equalized Valuation (SEV); and (d) crime index within project areas. Neighborhoods may also submit other data to demonstrate need.

An eligible neighborhood organization is a nongovernmental unit serving a definable geographic area. The neighborhood organization must have elected officers and adopted by-laws indicating its purpose. It must have a minimum membership of 50 households, or 10% of the households within its boundaries and membership must be available to any person residing within the organization's boundaries.

Eligible business firms are sole proprietorships, partnerships, or corporations authorized to do business in Michigan and subject to tax under Act No. 228 of the Public Acts of 1975, as amended.

Applicants are encouraged to develop programs dealing with job training, crime prevention, community services, physical revitalization, or other neighborhood needs. In other states, neighborhood assistance programs have been used to fund a wide variety of community activities.

In Pennsylvania, a group of clothing manufacturers used the program to run a training program for educationally and economically deprived neighborhood residents. Other businesses have funded physical improvements such as housing rehabilitation and commercial redevelopment, which helped neighborhoods maintain economic and social vitality. Other uses of NAPP have included day care facilities, retraining of unemployed workers, antivandalism programs, and treatment of alcoholism and drug abuse.



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What's going on down there in Depot Town? True, I've been on the road a few years, but when I heard about your "Boomer Days" celebration last Spring, I bummed a ride back to Ypsi just so my old friends might revel in my King-of-the-Road authenticity. And what happened? I am enclosing some notes from my summer journal while visiting the old neighborhood these last few months:

May 31 — The joint is crawling with Boomers, most of whom reek of aftershave lotion — which they don't even drink! The Frog Island Hobo Jungle now includes upholstered vans with Coleman doorbells and Woody Guthrie stereo tape decks.

June 7 — I hide out at the old Central Bar, where, when I ask for some odd jobs to do in return for an occasional beer, they give me an electrolux vacuum cleaner to sweep the carpet! A rug on the floor? What next?

June 14 — I stealthily scout what looks like an abandoned box car and am invited on board by a lovely blond lady, asked to sign a guest register, and "Would I like a cup of coffee?" Have the railroads lost their minds?

June 21 — a short stop at the Alibi finds a trucker ordering a Pink Lady, sitting in the sunlight near a potted palm at the bar . . . while an Ypsilanti Arts Council delegation debates the staging of O'Neill's "The Ice Man Cometh" over a pitcher of beer at a backroom table.

June 28 — Local do-gooders sign me up for a neighborhood half-way house and I find the whole household is on a Depot Town Association Committee for neighborhood improvement. Seems the only LUSH on the block is the condition of the flower beds which define the newly paved parking lots. Butts and returnable bottles are almost impossible to find amongst the posies.

July 5 — After the American Legion Fourth of July Parade I find most of the city's trash receptacles are now hung on light poles at chest height and, although one can clearly see the bottom, it is impossible to reach from this position.

July 19 — Several of the best "trashers" on the street now use gigantic dumpsters the size of a coal tender. They are waterproof and out of the wind, but are dumped too regularly to become a permanent residence.

August 9 — I decide to find anonymity by dressing down and deck myself out in a pair of old jeans, a blue work shirt and a Caterpillar tractor hat found in a backyard on the East Side. Maybe this chi chi neighborhood will recognize a real bum when they see one. Spend the night under the old caboose near the freight house and am awakened the next a.m. by dozens of hicks clad in denim overalls, jeans, coveralls, straw hats, the whole seedy works! Real rubes — just in from the farm to sell vegetables to these City Folks.

August 16 — I pitch a makeshift tent in Riverside Park and am immediately offered a Federal Grant for the Ypsilanti Public Schools' Indian Crafts exhibit. Several hundred tots mob me and start asking questions about my ancestry. What a nerve.

August 23 — Hanging out at a sidewalk beer garden only gets me on another committee but it also gets me a free beer now and then and a T-shirt with "Stroh's" written on the front. Whatever happened to "Cadillac Club"? Oh, well.

August 24 — Back to Frog Island to avoid the crowds where I am revisited by the DT's. I've seen elephants before, but they were usually pink. This one is grey and is accompanied by dancing ducks and goats. A quick visit from the County Health Department and I decide to duck into the Huron River.

September 6 — I awake early in the morning and find the hallucinatory crowds gone, but am now greeted with polite applause as the Crusade for Jesus Rally props me up at a microphone as exhibit "A" for their temperance campaign.

October 4 — You've gone too far, Depot Town. I can't stand the pace any more, so, with the turning of the seasons, I plan to move South again to some nice, quiet place like Atlantic City or Miami Beach. See you in the Spring for your next Boomer Days.

These times, they are a-changin'.BOOMER

OLIVER'S alibi

• BOOZE, BURGERS & BILLIARDS •